

# THE RAINBOW CHASER

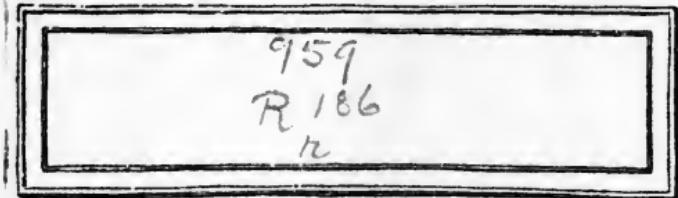
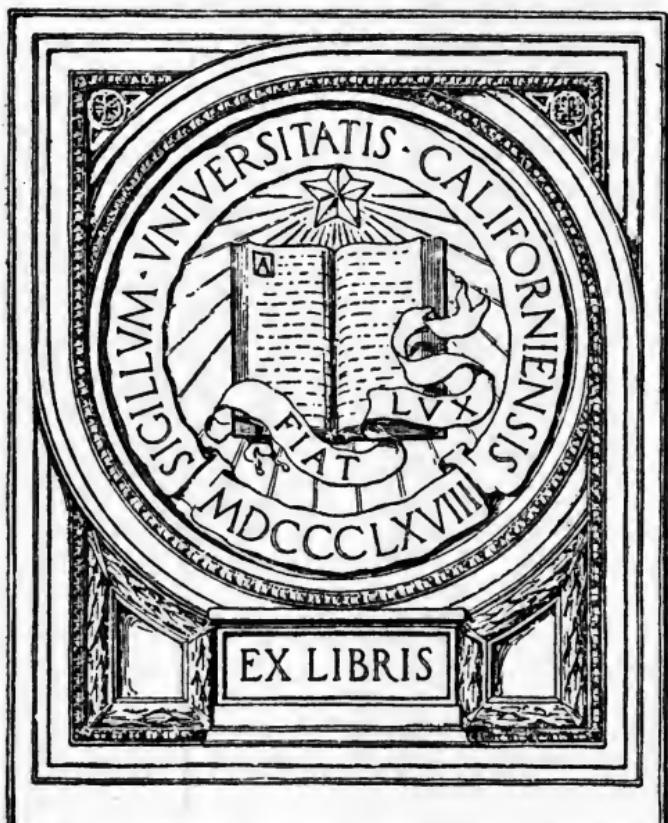
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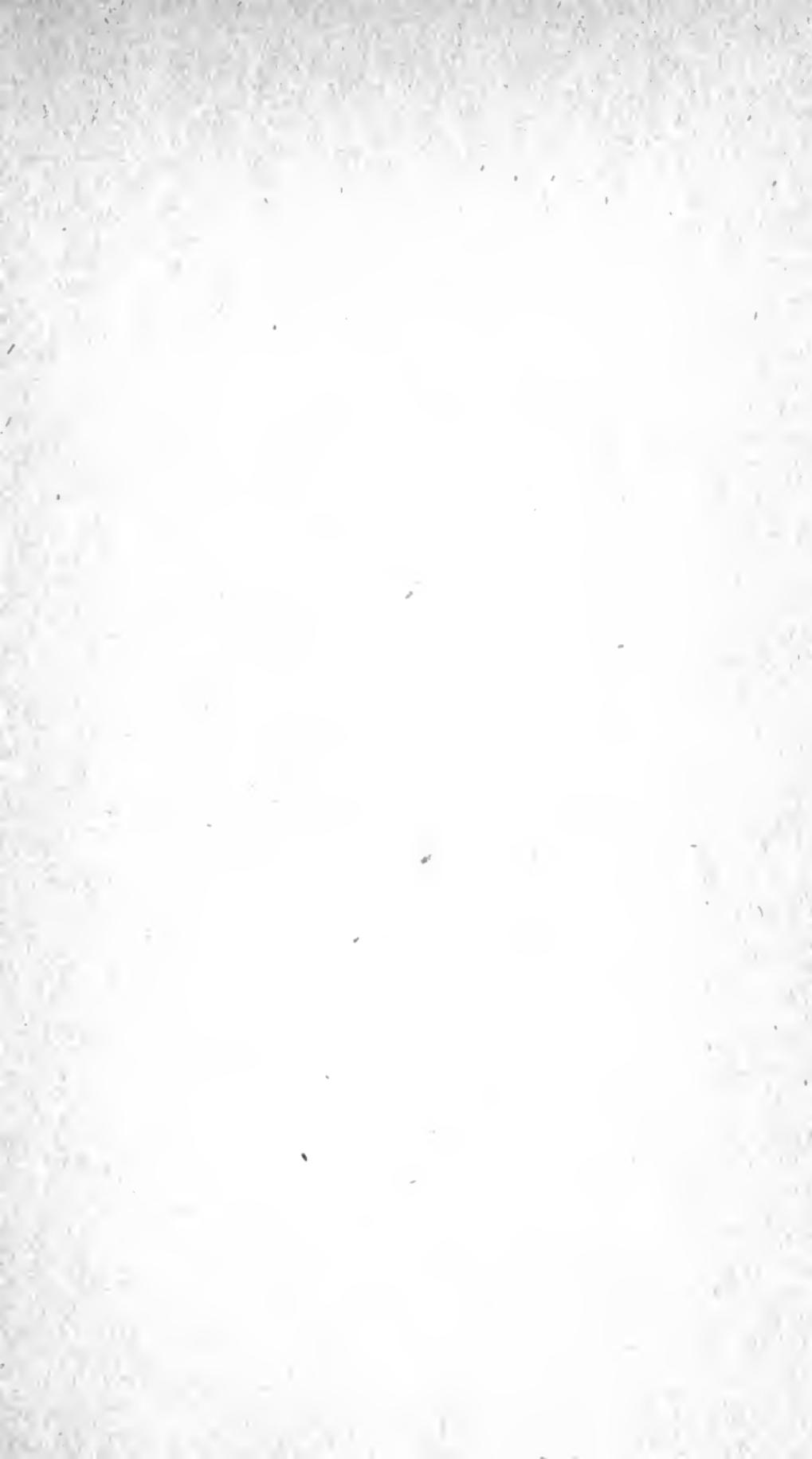


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KENNETH RAND











# The Rainbow Chaser and Other Poems

BY

KENNETH RAND

Author of "The Dirge of  
the Sea-Children," etc.



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## AUTHOR'S NOTE

Of the following poems, "The Rainbow Chaser" first appeared in *The Smart Set*; "The Dream Minstrel" in *Lippincott's*; "The Half-Poet," "The Lonely Road," "The Sun-Worshipper," "Out on the Paths of Wonder," "A Pagan's Creed" and "The Liar" in *The Yale Literary Magazine*; "The Blind Gypsy" in *The Bellman*. Thanks are due the editors of these publications for permission to reprint.



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## PRELUDER

### THE HALF-POET

BECAUSE a Palm is laid across my lips  
When most the phrases clamor to be sung,  
I may not ape the ready love that slips  
Like beggar's patter from a smoother tongue;  
I blame, who envy: yet, beneath the Hand,  
The silence speaks to those that understand.

Gold of the sun, and wonder of the days!  
Murrain on life, to lend but half a voice!  
How may I bear the rapture and amaze  
Of loving, while the very clods rejoice?  
Yet may I speak my part, when planets see  
The dim Hand leave my dumb lips spirit-free.



## THE RAINBOW CHASER

I'VE followed my restless heart  
To the uttermost ends of earth —  
New stars arise in alien skies,  
Yet what is my roving worth?  
Have I wasted my wealth of years  
In a profitless wayside mart,  
And garnered a crop of rue and tears  
From heritage-seeds of dearth?  
Aye, the way is over-long,  
And the road is ever new —  
It may be right or it may be wrong  
And my love be false or true —  
So long as the rainbow hold,  
And its glittering arch extend,  
I'm off for the pot of fairy gold  
On a road without an end!

*On a road without an end —  
Though Fate be harsh or kind —  
Ah, Love may sleep and eyes may weep,  
But we've left the world behind!*

I've followed my fleeting love  
From the east to the luring west,  
And north and south through flood and drouth  
I've carried my soul's unrest.  
Have I bartered my house and home,  
And my hopes of Heaven above,

For a castle built of fairy foam  
And a maiden's merry jest?  
Aye, my palace of a dream  
May be over far away —  
Ye know, who follow the rainbow-gleam,  
How dear is the price ye pay!  
Ye know, and yet ever bold,  
Wherever the trail may trend,  
Ye're off for the pot of fairy gold  
On a road without an end!

*On a road without an end —*  
*With never a goal to find —*  
*Ah, Love may die and so may I,*  
*But we've left the world behind!*

## A PAGAN'S CREED

A flow of golden shadows, love and laughter,  
And gleam of summer tears;  
Bright spectres born of sunlight — and then  
after  
Come the dead years.

For what is life without the loss and winning —  
The lure of lidded glance,  
The ecstasy of joyous-hearted sinning,  
The shadow-dance

By moonlight down an ilex-hidden hollow  
Of mountain solitudes,  
Where the dear ghosts of dead Bacchantes fol-  
low  
Through haunted woods?

Life is a pagan, dancing in the glamour  
Of ruddy sunset-light,  
Who scorns the sequel to the revel's clamor —  
Tears in the night.

So, though the years bring dearth of easy par-  
don,  
And wealth of barren ground,  
Still let the torchlight waver down the garden,  
The cymbals sound —

Till, through the panting, bare-limbed festal  
madness,  
With the red morning-glow  
Comes at the last the clear-eyed, cynic sadness  
The wise Gods know.

## THE LIAR

I WROUGHT me a lyric of fire and fear,  
And called on the world to heed —  
Till strong men blenched at my haggard face  
And shuddered, but would not read.

So I stole me the gold of the mines of Joy  
And fashioned a conscious lie —  
And they gave me the wreath of the kings of  
Song  
And prayed that I might not die!

(For the lie that I wrought was as old as the  
world  
And dear as the vision of Heaven —  
Of the crimson lure of a maiden's lips  
And the myth of a sin forgiven!)

But my heart was sick, and my soul grew less,  
With the light of my failing days,  
Because I had lied to my Knowledge-God  
For the pottage of human praise.

O I clung to the rim of the cliffs of Hell  
And called on an empty Name —  
Till there dropped the tears of a weeping Truth  
And saved my soul from the flame.

So I hid my soul in a maiden's hair,  
And climbed to a clearer view —  
*And I found I had lied to a lying God,*  
*And the myth I had sung — was true!*

## THE SUN-WORSHIPPER

O PASSING gods of passing creeds  
That droop and die with mortal men!  
Their ages-long procession leads  
Through darkness to the Sun again —  
Poor sorry ghosts that wheel and flee  
Like shadows on a wind-swept sea.

For since we bear the yoke of Faith  
And cringe to feel the goad of Doubt,  
Our tortured Reason weaves a Wraith  
Of Godhead we would die without —  
A painted dream of carven plinths  
And ghosts in man-wrought labyrinths.

Toys of a thought! The fortune-wheel  
Of myriad vague existences!  
Yet hear we not Thy challenge peal  
Across the blue-lit distances?  
The bannered shout at morn that stirred  
Our oldest fathers with Thy word.

For art Thou not the Primal God —  
The Sun that watched the youth of Man —  
That touched the earth his children trod,  
And bade it live, ere gods began?  
The fertile ploughland laughs that sees  
The births and deaths of deities!

Thy fingers bless the swelling bud,  
Thy feet are gold across the hill —  
I find Thy shrine in deepest wood,  
Thy magic in each leaping rill ;  
And death itself Thy pantomime —  
A scene-shift on the stage of Time.

So bow ye then to nameless lords  
Ye may not feel, or see, or hear —  
And bind the Soul in precept-cords  
For sacrifice to curtained Fear!  
*Brother, thy creed is strong to save?*  
*I cry thee comfort in thy grave!*

## THE LONELY ROAD

I THINK thou waitest, Love, beyond the Gate —  
Eager, with wind-stirred ripples in thy hair;  
I have not found thee, and the hour is late,  
And harsh the weight I bear.

Far have I sought, and flung my wealth of years  
Like a young traveler, gay at careless inns —  
See how the wine-stain whitens 'neath the tears  
My burden wins!

And wilt thou know me, Love, with bended back,  
Or wilt thou scorn me, in so drear a guise?  
I have a wealth of sorrows in my pack,  
One lonely prize —

*Thy dream* — and dross of sin. . . . O, dim the  
fields —  
I may not find thee in so dark a land —  
Yet I await what hope the turning yields  
And beg with empty hand.

## THE BLIND GYPSY

My world is girt with a rampart of wonder and shadow,

Sunless I wander, forlorn, on the barrens of Time and Space —

With only the scent of the sun on the heather, the song o'er the meadow,

The dust of the highway warm on my feet, and the wind in my face.

The roads that I knew are the paths of an infinite terror,

Treacherous, threading morasses of peril, abysses of night ;

And only the feel of the wind and the heat, in my mazes of error,

To whisper of dawn or of noon, and the dear lost rapture of light.

Yet, with the sun and the breeze and the dust on the highway,

Only, O Lord, to feel! — and I cling to Thy garment's fold —

And the snapping of fires that I may not see, by the hedge in the byway,

Is the crackle of flame-new stars, and the clangor of gates of gold.

## “OUT ON THE PATHS OF WONDER”

Out on the paths of wonder,  
Where the mountains sit with their feet in the  
white sea-foam,  
And the wayward lightnings roam  
In their curtained caves of fire,  
Till the wings of the Hags of Night are riven  
asunder  
And the sea is pale as the rags of a tattered  
shroud —  
Under the star-split dome of driven cloud  
I walk with my dead desire.

In the deeps of the blue-lit spaces,  
Where the Master of Shadow is lord, and the  
Silence nods,  
The glow of thine eyes, O love, is a flame of  
rapture,  
And the sound of thy whisper the music of  
heavenly places,  
And the net of thy tresses a silken snare to  
capture  
The hearts of the careless gods.

Thy feet are light on the ramparts of earth  
and heaven,  
Thy limbs are wet with the spray of the Seas  
of Years,

Thy cheeks are gay with the flush of the Rose  
love-given,

And salt with the wine of tears.

Thy lips are warm and sweet with thy long  
bereaving,

And thy breast is soft with the pain of thy  
love and grieving.

Over the lift and the send  
Of the sea, till we win to the innermost heart of  
the maze

Of the web of the Years and the Days!

Till the riddle of Time

Shall ravel and fade and dissolve to the utter-  
most end,

And the heights that we climb,

The wind-pitted mountains of Air,

Shall flame with the crown and the splendor and  
triumph eternal

Of death, till I cover my face with the mesh of  
thy hair,

At the glory supernal!

For the Word of the Lord of the Gloom shall  
be drowned in singing,

And the shores of the Ocean of Terror re-  
sound with voices,

And the vaults and the arches of bottomless  
Shadow be ringing

With the song of an infinite gladness,

Till the lowliest depth of the shambles of Sin  
rejoices

In the grip of thy great love-madness.  
And the mightiest Gods of the Shadow shall flee  
at the light of thine eyes,

Belovèd, who saith:

*If ye wander with Love in the gardens of Paradise,*

*Shall ye flinch at the fingers of Death?*

Out on the paths of wonder,  
Where the Master of Shadow is throned on the  
sea, and the Silence nods,  
I walk with my dead desire in the caves of the  
sleeping thunder,  
And mock at the grim-eyed gods.

## THE SEER

I MAY not tread the kindly ways  
Where trudge the feet of men,  
Nor know the pride of honest praise  
Or flush of shame again;  
My hearth-fire is the fairy blaze  
That flits above the fen.

In that the gift is mine to see  
A hand's-breadth i' the gloom,  
And glimpse through curtained mystery  
The dim To-morrow loom,  
I walk the woods of fantasie  
Where fairy flowers bloom.

O I have wept when all were gay,  
And Youth and Love were wed,  
For I have seen the death-sark sway  
Above the bridegroom's head —  
The dead-hole gape across the way  
His eager feet must tread.

Then what the gift (as mortals tell)  
To walk the racing tide,  
Or with the ghosts at Olaf's Well  
On Lammas-floods to ride,  
When I have heard the shadow-knell  
And living men have died?

## THE DREAM MINSTREL

Across the world from Fairyland the winds  
have blown a song to me —

(Harper, wake your magic in the old grey  
hall)

And the sunlight on the flagging is a patch of  
tattered blazonry,

Shred o' fading glory on the dull drab wall.

Turn again — turn again — see the weave un-  
ravelling —

(Harper, set you back again the grey Fates'  
loom)

Till the fields are gay with April and the heart  
has ceased a-sorrowing —

(Lovers in the orchard, with the apple-trees  
in bloom!)

Across the world from Fairyland the little  
winds have flung to me

Petals of the wild rose, riotous and red,  
And the scent of summer woodland where the  
sun-embroidered tracery

Gilds the moldy carpet of the old year's  
dead;

Scent of happy valleys, and the treasure of the  
marigold,—

(Happy, sunny valleys in the Provinces of  
Dream)

Hark the whisper, lilting, “*Love, my heart is  
ever thine to hold —*  
*Ever and forever, till the last star's gleam!*”

“*Ever and forever —*” but the wind is o'er the  
hills to me,  
(The blue hills o' Faerie, O harper in the  
hall)

Luring on to follow down the shadow-lane of  
memory,

Memory as faded as the sunlight on the wall.  
Turn again — weave again — set the loom  
ahead again —

Summer-gold is darkening to hot, blood red;  
“*Ever and forever — forever —*” Ah, the love  
o' men!

(Harper, still your magic, ere my heart  
droop dead!)

## REACTION

LAST night methinks our madness won to  
Truth —

There in the starlit temple of the sky —  
Stripped for the nonce our cynic robes of  
Youth,

Let slip our creeds, and left but *You* and *Me*  
Stark on the land's-end of philosophy.

To-day we meet with faces wrung and wry —  
Poor harlequins in masks of sanity!

## THE BALLAD OF THE RED FOOL

THE Jester laughed at the castle gate  
*(The stone was grey, and the iron cold)*  
And sang of a monarch good and great  
Who flung a Jester a purse of gold.  
*(Mighty the king, and wise, and bold!)*

The Baron sat at his window high  
*(O his hair was white, but the month was May)*  
And marked a hawk in the empty sky,  
And a budding tree, and a lamb at play.  
*(Ragged the Fool, but the song was gay.)*

The Jester shifted his scarlet cloak  
*(The robe was torn, but the cloth was red)*  
And rattled his battered staff of oak  
On the barred portcullis above his head;  
And “Ho!” cried he. “Are ye drunk or dead?

“For the gate is wide, and the yeomen sleep —”  
*(O the lord was free with his beef and beer)*  
“And only the rooks are guarding the keep,  
With all Romance at the portal here;  
Is the knight so great, that he scorns his gear?”

The yeomen snored in the sunlit court,  
And the Baron dreamed at his window high,  
As the Jester crept through a sally-port  
And cast about with a searching eye.  
*(Drowsy the wind from the sapphire sky!)*

He filled him full with the Baron's wine  
*(The grapes are plump on the Spanish hills)*  
And crowned the yeomen with columbine  
And wreathed a vine in the window-grills.  
*(The wine-cup spattered in purple rills.)*

He found him pens and a horn of ink  
And parchment fallow for tithe and tax,  
And wrote him a song to the goblet's clink,  
While the lizards crept from the pavement  
cracks —  
*(The sun was bright on an idle axe.)*

He wrote him a song of a stalwart knight  
*(O a knight is sad for the want of a maid)*  
Who followed the lure of a gay love-light  
Over the wide world, unafraid.  
*(O merry the carol of shield and blade!)*

He weighted the scroll with an empty cup,  
And left it plain on the Penman's board —  
Where the flagons at hand held never a sup.  
*(Heavy the book that the Penman pored,  
And heady the wine that Barons afford!)*

The Jester reeled in a tipsy dance  
And hummed a tune of a knight and lass;  
Quoth he, "For the wine I have paid Romance,  
And a stave to carol at Michaelmas!"  
*(O the Spanish wine in the crystal glass!)*

So he laughed away through the portal's gloom  
*(The sun was gold and the sky was blue)*  
While the Baron dreamed in his tower room  
Of a joust, and a lady fair and true.  
*(The love was old, but the dream was new.)*

Then the Penman yawned and blinked and  
stirred  
*(O flagons of wine and a hunch of bread!)*  
And his thought was slow as a wounded bird,  
And he dreamed he had written the song that  
he read,  
By the grace of God and a muddled head!

They gave him a wreath and a purse of gold  
*(O songs of jousts and a lady fair!)*  
And a velvet mantle to turn the cold,  
And he sat at meat in a carven chair,  
With the laurel twined in his scanty hair.

The Jester slept in the ditch below  
*(O wine of Spain, with its fire and pride!)*  
And what ever came of him none may know —  
But the Penman sat at the Baron's side.  
*(Sing hey, Romance and the world so wide!)*

## JACK O' VISIONS

JACK o' Visions, dreaming in the firelight,  
What's the picture in the embers' glow?  
*'Tis but the flame of wasted summers, fading,  
To die in winter snow.*

And what care you for summer and its wasting,  
Grey-headed Jack, who hugs the dulling fire?  
*'Tis but that Youth is such a sorry spendthrift,  
And dreams are his desire.*

And may they not be worthy of the spending,  
O cynic Jack, the dreams he never won?  
*They are not worth one magic day in April  
A-lilt with wind and sun.*

Ah, Jack, but see them, how they flutter gleaming —  
Like tropic birds that sailors trade for gold!  
*I' faith, they be as fleet and hard to capture,  
And droop in autumn cold.*

Then say what Youth may buy with all his riches,  
His Ophir-horde of newly-minted years!  
*Why, let him purchase Love and War and Laughter,  
And wine of honest tears.*

What say you? 'Tis a dole we hold in common —

The draught of Life we do not need to buy.  
*Alas, yet there be many who go thirsting,*  
*Nor prize it till they die.*

## FAUNUS AT THE CROSS

As I followed the feet of the sun on the wind-swept hills,  
When the light-flung gold of the spring was gay on the grass,  
I caught through the careless laughter of loosened rills  
From the church in the valley the drone of the priests at Mass.

And I looked at the dun grey House, and the heavens above,  
While I stood with the wind in my face and the sun on my head,  
And learned of the passion of Christ (but I dreamed of Love)  
And the bright-lipped wounds (were they red as the rose was red?)

Then my heart leaped up like a stag at the shadow of fear,  
For I glimpsed in a vision the loom of the Altar of Pain —  
And the flare of its terror was torture to blast and sear,  
Yet fair was the snow-white brow with its crimson stain!

So I plucked me a red, red wreath where the sunbeams slept —

“ Let Beauty to Beauty be brought as a garland,” I cried,

And I covered the Thorns with a chaplet of roses, and wept

For the grace of the blood-stained limbs that had drooped and died —

When sudden the folds of the Vision were sun-dered, and there

At the shrine of the Pale-Browed God in my terror I stood,

And the satin-skinned petals fell slow through the spice-drugged air,

And redder they lay on the stones than the painted blood.

O I shrank from the grim-mouthed priests and their harrying spell,

Till the curses ran out from the Cross and pursued as I fled;

But I bent to the rose-wreathed Christ in a last farewell,

And the pure lips flashed to a smile and were soft and red —

While a whisper as light as the whorls of the censers' smoke

Wrapped me in wonder and crept to the doors of my ears —

*“Fear not! Be it grace of the Rose, or the  
strength of the Oak,  
Through both is my heart, when ye bow be-  
fore Beauty with tears!”*

## A HARBOR SONG

THERE'S a schooner in the offing, with the sunset in her sails —  
She's black as death across the west where slow the splendour fails ;  
There's an evil wind from out the east that backs against the day,  
But she's shaking out her headsails for the saunter down the bay.

There's a trail of ruddy cloth-of-gold that runs to meet the Sun —  
The path is plain before her, but her road is never done ;  
She may not stay for prize or pay, for love or law or hire,  
When she harks to old Ulysses in his Islands of Desire !

O the hills that fade behind her know the touch of fairy feet,  
The pipes of Pan are lilting clear from field to village street ;  
And Spring is in the orchard-row, though saddened hearts may break —  
But she's dropping down the harbor with her shadow on her wake.

So it's hide away your hope, my love, and lay  
away your fears ;  
Your dreams are all behind you, with the rap-  
ture and the tears ;  
'Tis a sorry trick of tops'l's — to catch the sun-  
set so —  
When dying *Love-will-keep-him* turns to *Love-*  
*has-bade-him-go!*

O, it's roll her down to westward, for the prom-  
ise of the Sun !  
Can lure of woman hold the hearts the mother  
sea has won ?  
They may not stay for prize or pay, for love  
or law or hire,  
When they hark to old Ulysses in his Islands of  
Desire !

## A WAYSIDE PARABLE

A WIND ran over the western hill  
And the dust of the road was gay,  
But the little smoke of the wayside fire  
Was lost in the twilight-grey.  
Said the Dust, "There is hope for the morn,"  
Said the Fire, "Ere the morn, I die,"  
And its ghost rose up to the vaulted roof  
Of the temple-hall of the sky.

The wind slipped over the purpling crest  
With a mantle of trailing cloud,  
And spread the Dust on the sleeping earth  
In a great grey tattered shroud.  
And the hill was lost in a veil  
Of the dark wet hair of the rain,  
Till the spark of a Fire hailed the quickening east  
And the dim smoke curled again.

The wind strode in with the lifting sun  
And the smoke of the fire was gay —  
But the Dust was dead in the silver pools  
That laughed with the laughing day.  
Sang the wind, "Did ye fear, ere ye drooped  
and died —  
Did ye doubt what the Prophets said? "  
And the new Fire snapped on its chrysalis-ash,  
"Not I! But when was *I* dead? "

## THE SORROW-EATER

WHY dost thou play 'tis thy dead love's heart  
That beats in the gloom beside thee?  
Surely thou learnest the minstrel's art,  
So close in thy dream to hide thee!

Why dost thou play 'tis thy dead love's hair  
That nets with its silk thy shoulder?  
(Tricks of a harlot not overly fair —  
Ah, brother, thy heart grows colder!)

Why dost thou play 'tis thy dead love's kiss  
So fresh on thy lips and burning?  
— *Peace! I have tasted the flame-hot bliss  
That comes with a grief's returning.*

## VESPER SONG ON THE OPEN ROAD

As a ribbon of raw red copper the road runs  
    into the west,  
Looping the flanks of the mountain-ranks like  
    a chain on a maiden's breast —  
The road that swerves and dips and curves till  
    it drops to the far sea-rim,  
Where the trampling feet of the breakers beat  
    in a marching battle-hymn.

*For it's O my love,  
    Let the stars above  
That burn on the bier of Day,  
    Blazon our path through the Chaos-  
        wrath,  
Ten million worlds away!*

The rim of the Shield of the Master sinks, but  
    His helmet-plumes are high —  
Flaunting in crimson and taunting the shadows  
    that creep to the zenith-sky ;  
The road is a ribbon of Romany red in the hair  
    of the gypsy earth,  
And the trembling seas on a loom of breeze are  
    veiling her heart's unworth.

*For it's O my love,  
    When the stars above  
Are witching our feet astray,  
    Fear ye to wend to the Cosmos-End,  
Ten million worlds away?*

The silver spear of the hornèd moon is spurring  
the steeds of Night,  
And it's haste, ah, haste, ere the sun-gold waste  
and wane in her altar-light!  
For though love-shod through the paths untrod  
of the valley of Death we run,  
Yet hand-in-hand we may breathless stand, and  
weep that the road be done!

*For it's O my love,  
Let the stars above  
That burn on the bier of Day,  
Lead us to meet at the Master's feet,  
Ten million worlds away!*

## ATHEISM

I DREAMED one night that I was lost among  
The sounding mazes of an endless vault,  
Deep-wrought from living stone, where spirits  
halt  
Their fearful flitting, and where grinning hung  
Dry, monstrous skeletons, and corpses clung  
To crosses for some unforgotten fault —  
While dumb lips prayed that hidden Gods . . .  
Accursèd souls long since from Heaven  
flung. . . .

But lo, deep in the shambles' midmost cell  
There shone a lamp, and by it, stern and  
stark,  
Amidst a sea of books, a figure sat  
That scorned the light and faced the empty  
dark —  
That seemed a God itself — yet could not tell  
What in the shadows it was staring at.

## A FINANCIAL TRANSACTION

“ I’M in horrible want,” quoth the shivering bard.

“ Can’t I manage to raise a loan?  
I’ve some property left, though to risk it is hard,

For ’tis all I can call my own.  
But hey, for the red of the wine and the rose! —  
I’ll give you an ample gain —  
If I don’t pay up, you may straight foreclose  
On my wonderful Castle in Spain! ”

So the Usurer World gave him treasure o’  
dreams

On the pledge of his mortgaged towers;  
But he couldn’t pay up, for he squandered, it  
seems,

Every ducat on wine and flowers.  
Yet the grim old Broker, with never a tear,  
Charged an interest-rate of Pain —  
Evicted the Poet, and then (as I hear)  
*Moved into the Castle in Spain!*

## THE OLD LOVERS

WE meet in a sorrowful land  
That is hard by the gates of death —  
A smile, and a touch of the hand,  
As the sunset's flaming brand  
Flickers and fails in the west  
With the day-wind's dying breath —  
'Tis the most we may dare, and best.

They say that the passion is cold —  
That the flame is dead in the heart ;  
“Good friends, that have loved of old,  
Once more, in the sunset-gold,  
Meet with a clasp of the hand,  
Nod and dream and depart —”  
Ah, love, 'tis a sorrowful land !

I that have walked in a cloud,  
You that have wept in the sun —  
Wrinkled and wearied and bowed,  
Cover the wound ! Be proud !  
Laugh — be it Hell the while —  
That the world, ere the Hell be done,  
May watch with a kindly smile.

## A WESTERN OCEAN LYRIC

THERE's a wind that treads the water  
With tramp of sullen feet,  
And grim and gray the westers play  
With knives of driven sleet ;  
Our bows are shod with silver,  
But purple-dark and cold  
The shadows fly across the sky  
To dim the sunset-gold.

O cursed be all the breezes  
That hedge the west in cloud,  
And twice and thrice, the crusted ice  
That clings to stay and shroud !  
Against the light the foremast  
Is bright with frozen mail —  
The decks are gray with flying spray  
And rough with spattered hail.

There's a fog that numbs the ocean  
To smoky deeps where hide  
The noisy hosts of hooting ghosts  
That warn from overside ;  
O cursed be all the shadows  
Of bank and shoal and bar,  
And send us clear the silver spear  
That arms an honest star !

## THE SATIRIST

I TOOK a snatch of sun-wrack, and a whiff  
Of south-wind laden with the drone of surf  
That booms on golden shores, where palm-roots  
run

In tangled webs to taste the milk-warm wave:  
(So keeps the Sea her children-isles of dream,  
And calls her exiled dreamers home again.)

Of these I wove a song — and all the years  
Fled ghost-like, vanished, dropped me swift to  
youth,

And gave me back Hesperides. Ay, Love,  
That left me, laughing, æons past, and hid —  
(Bare, sun-kissed shoulders glinting through  
the maze

Of *rata* twining 'mid the tree-trunks!) —  
seemed

To loose for me the dark flood of her hair  
And drown me in it. . . . — When I strove to  
sing

My song to other men, and let the world  
Share but a fraction of my joy and pain,  
What said they? “Lo, the song is old and  
sad —

Why more of it? ‘Twas well sung long ago,  
To smoother music.” So I took a bar  
Of blood-wrought steel, and spun it into thread  
Bright, cold, and sharp as dust of diamonds.

Then

I wove it on a loom of artifice,  
Lent it a gargoyle's grin, called it a song,  
And turned it loose. *And all the world cried*  
*“Hail!*  
*Here sings a bard whose voice will never die!”*

## IN A CONVENT GARDEN

YOUNG love, strong love, meeting 'mid the roses!

Dare ye think of loving, where the plaster Mary poses?

Better Pan should roister

In the shade of hallowed cloister! —

Idle droops the rosary — what paganry discloses!

True love, new love, dancing down the ages —  
Mocking at the precepts and the parables of  
sages!

Balance they the blisses

Of a hundred stolen kisses

Snatched while Mother Beatrice was nodding  
o'er the pages?

Old love, bold love, weary with its madness!

Mock ye, then, at April with its glamour and  
its gladness?

Since ye know the sorrows

Of a hundred spent To-morrows,

Dream ye that your day is done, and fading  
into sadness?

Sad love, mad love! Leap ye, then, to waking?  
Light ye bear the burden of the grieving and  
forsaking!

Lips that sip of laughter  
Learn the tang of sorrow after—  
Learn, and drink in silence, while the gayer  
hearts are breaking!

## THE DEGENERATE SPEAKS

I SEE you pass like a wayward god in a robe of wonder,

Prince of the realms of Youth, with the flame  
in your eyes —

Shoulders that jostle the hats of the mob, till  
it wavers asunder,

Splitting in torrents of hurrying faces, drab  
as the skies.

The clouds are low where the clang ing streets  
of the demon-city

Raise to the heavens the reek of their grooved  
ravines,

And you come like a sprite of the sun, with a  
present of pity —

Pity that stings like a helot's lash, in our  
hell-demesnes!

Ay, saw you me too? — with the leaden stare  
and the drooping shoulder —

Furtive, mean, with the brand of the Rat in  
my face?

— Weary with years? By the years, it is *you*  
are the older —

You, with the youth-hot passionate eyes, and  
the dancer's grace!

The chance was mine, and the fault was mine,  
and the sorrow and sighing,  
But I was weary, too weary to grieve, from  
the first;  
Ay, and the gateway of Peace and Forgetting,  
that comforts the dying,  
Careless the Gods left wide — I was mothered  
accurst.

O eyes that follow the cycle of life in eternal  
revolving!  
Pity, my gay Greek god, the slave on the  
treadmill of Time!  
Mad?, I am mad with the direst of sanities!  
This the absolving—  
That I should dance in the revel of Youth  
like a painted mime.

The trailing folds of the curtain of Birth are in  
tatters—  
See how the torrents of Time unveil — how  
the lives are massed!  
What — you would *help* me? O blindness of  
life! As if Charity matters—  
Matters to me, with my youth — a century  
deep in the past!

## PSYCHE KARDIOU

THERE is a ghost that arms the hearts of men  
Till Death the victor fails, allied with Fear —  
Till Sorrow stoops to comfort, and each tear  
Glints like a dewdrop touched by morn again;  
Some name it Faith, that lights the darksome  
fen  
Of worldly doubt; some call it Insight clear;  
Some Love; some Reason stark in robes austere,  
Or crash of battle down a hostile glen.

Yet for the war what arms I bear I owe  
To a dim ghost-soul that I may not free,  
That feels the stir of wind, the beat of sea,  
And neither Faith nor Reason, dares to *know!*  
What would I be without my spectre? Lo!  
A craven, clutching at Eternity!

## A VAGABOND'S PRAYER TO LIFE

LIFE, for the span of a day,  
For a morn, for an hour,  
Ere I am weary and old  
    Give me power to pay —  
Pay with the red sun-gold  
    And the dew on the flower,  
Debts that I owe to the gods  
    Of the lonely way.

In that I dared it alone  
    Through the sun and the shadow,  
Deeming the House of the Skies  
    But the roof of mine own,  
Give me at length to surprise  
    With the lark o'er the meadow  
Themes of the songs of the gods  
    By the winds new-blown.

This — and my father, the Sun,  
    For a friend, for a neighbor —  
Lending the world for the field  
    Of a gay fight won —  
Lo, with the dawning revealed  
    Lie the goals of my labor!  
Roads that are marked by the gods  
    Ere my strength be done.

Yet, when I wake to the day  
That shall dawn on my garden,  
In that I journeyed alone  
Give me friends, to repay!  
Friends with the sins to atone  
That shall win me their pardon —  
Debtors with me to the gods  
Of the lonely way!

## THE PENCIL PEDDLER

EARTH and its glory, the rain and the sunlight  
on oceans unsounded,  
Life and its magic, the pain and the pleasure,  
the rapture unbounded,  
Love and its scented abysses of torture rose-  
hidden —  
All except Death have I known, that alone  
was forbidden.

Passers that brush me, nor heed me, the cripple  
that squats in the gutter,  
Would ye could read, 'neath the lip's ready pat-  
ter, the curses I mutter!  
Once was I also a Man, in the flush of my  
passion; —  
Hated, loved, even as you — pitied, too, in  
my fashion!

Even as you, O my brothers in masking! And  
this the finale —  
Limping so slowly on leather-shod stumps, may  
I win to the Valley?  
Fling me a copper — my blessing, that for-  
tune should fall so;  
Spurn me — and mind not my curses, for  
thus was I, also.

## THE OLD VOYAGERS

THERE's a trumpet-call at twilight, when the  
world is grey with sorrow —

Monotones of sorrow where the dimming  
ocean lies —

And our pallid dead romances are the promise  
of a morrow

Far and fading into shadow where the last  
flame dies ;

Far and fading — can ye see it — can ye feel it  
— can ye hear it —

It is lost beyond the limit of the lost horizon-  
rim ;

In *our* day we lived on darkness ! Now the  
light has come to clear it,

And we brought the light, who loved it —  
would to God we'd left it dim !

Would to God we'd left the blankness and the  
mystery and luring

Of the empty places whispering of Ophir and  
Cathay,

Of the open, shoreless ocean, with its triumphs  
of enduring,

And the dawning and the sunset on the lone  
sea-way !

Of the magic islands lifting, hiding dim Cibola-  
cities,

Dim and hidden, dream-embattled, golden-streeted, silver-walled —

But we proved them — and we lost them — lend us mercy, Lord of Pities! —

For it seemed the Earth was endless — could we help it — we were called.

There's a trumpet-call at twilight, but our blades are dull and rusted,

And the caravels are rotting at the Quay of Missing Ships,

And the fever-ridden harbors where we drank and died and lusted,

Lo, they glimmer into nothings with the chan-teys on our lips!

We are spectres of adventure, but we haunt ye till ye need us,

Though the world is planned and plotted by the torment of our wars;

We are waiting in the Shadow till our kinsmen hear and heed us —

*Till they stamp the Earth beneath them and are gay amid the stars!*

## ENNUYÉ

O, once I played at passion well,  
Till all the world believed ;  
And hearts were jealous when I loved,  
And sorrowed when I grieved.  
But deep within me grinned a Self  
That would not be deceived.

“ O, ‘tis a jest,” the Spirit laughed,  
“ The human trick to steal !  
Where got you courage for the play ?  
I know *you* cannot feel.  
Oho ! ‘Tis such a roaring farce,  
I weep it is not real !

“ My friend, how won *you* right to sing,  
Or passion’s harp to strum ?  
Yet lips had never sung so true  
Had not the heart been dumb ;  
Your fingers never found the chords —  
Aye, what had you become ?

“ An infant, babbling silly woes ! —  
So play the mimic through !  
Be brave ! ” But I had lost my mask,  
And could not find a new ;  
And ’twas at best a weary play —  
I wept it had been true.

## THE EXILE

I HAVE known the joy of the upland, the peaks  
and the buttress-hills,  
The rock-sown windy barrens, new-ploughed  
by the 'shares of God ;  
The drone of the harp o' the tempest, and the  
small, clear song of the rills,  
And the crest flame-tipped in the dawning, at  
the touch of an angel's rod —

I have known the wrath of the upland, the tem-  
pled courts of the clouds,  
The threat of the storm-flung robes of snow  
that drop from the mountain's breast,  
But my heart is sick for the harvest wind, for  
the fields in their tawny shrouds,  
For a lamplit pane, and a plainsman's hearth,  
and — rest.

O a man can pray in the upland, in the vaulted  
church of the sky,  
And walk with Jove where the Titans raged,  
at the wrath of His face ;  
But I, who am bred to the arch of the stars, I  
will go to the plains to die,  
And tune my heart to the hymn of the storm  
on the floors of space.

## OUTCAST

Love that was light as a breeze at dawn —  
How should we stoop to fearing?  
Cowards that pander and slaves that fawn —  
Hounds that snuff at the trail we trod —  
We, that are safe on the knees of God,  
Heed we their ill-hid sneering,  
Love that was pure as the dawn?

Do the will-o'-the-wisp and the witch-fire heed  
What the dull world thinks of the paths they  
lead?

Nay — let us say  
That the wings of day  
Are ours to wander a world away,  
And not that, driven and shamed and blind,  
We left the sheltering Pale behind!

Ah, let us live  
With the bee on the flower —  
Forget and forgive  
With the hurrying hour!  
Till a love miscalled and a jest misread,  
Till a pampered lie and a truth unsaid,  
Die with the sting of a burnt-out scorn —  
Love that was pure as an April morn!

'Twas a half-meant kiss  
And a head on a shoulder —  
At the first but this —  
Yet, suddenly older,

We stood guilt-marked in the world-old Court,  
Where a pious grey rake held the judge's  
chair,

And were tried for a "crime of the baser sort"  
That the "good" may envy, but scarcely  
dare. . . .

O heart of my heart,  
Shall the lying creed  
In our world apart  
Bid us hide, or heed?

Let us laugh, though our motley be beggars'  
tatters;

True love, true love, is there aught else matters?

Since we have won to the knees of God,  
Why should the world be jealous?

That there's no return by the road we trod  
Need we the world to tell us?

Laugh and be gay! Do the witch-fires heed  
What the dull world thinks of the paths they  
lead?

We have won unsmirched through the sneers  
and scorn

Out into Life from a land forlorn,  
Out from the Dark to the blaze of the sun —  
Would you wish, at the ending, the deed undone,  
Love that is pure as an April morn?

## A YOUNG MAN'S PRAYER

LET me not live, O Time, to be old and weary —  
Thou, who art God of all Gods, and King of  
all Kings —

Let me not walk like a ghost in the sun, and  
dreary

Harken with ears long-dead when the wood-  
thrush sings —

Let me not wake on a day when the pennoned  
morning

Brightens on eyes unheeding, and cheeks un-  
flushed ;

Let me not darken the world with my misery,  
scorning

Joy of the birds, and whisper of wind dawn-  
hushed —

But let me die with my heart still gay with the  
tourney,

Facing the Dark with a song on my lips, and  
my feet

Light on the threshold that calls to the last long  
journey

Over the far blue hills where the highways  
meet !

## DUST

Across the ridge the barren earth runs down —  
Gay, vagrant dust that shifts with every  
breeze —

Over the hill-crest weaving mysteries,  
Against the sun's face wreathing thee a crown !  
Jester of ages, robed in grey and brown,  
See how it wraps thee, Love, with fantasies !  
Till like a priestess, gold-bathed to the knees,  
Thou standest shimmering in thy saffron gown.

Dust that is swift to hide or blind or dim,  
Yet that is rose-haze in the sunset-glow !  
Sweeping across autumnal fields, to skim  
Like wrack o' dreams along each barren row.  
Dare we despise it? Look ye, down the sky  
Drop with the moon the star-dust nebulae.

## THE CABIN-BOYS

IN the days when old New England was the  
half of all the nation,  
And the Injuns and Virginnys made the bal-  
ance of the land,  
We were starting life as farmers — and we  
worked to beat creation  
Tilling barren-gutted valleys, clearing boul-  
ders, ploughing sand.  
We were humble sons of farmers,  
Simple, slaving sons of farmers,  
Sons of heavy-handed farmers, who were hon-  
est as could be —  
But we heard a tale of pirates  
(Good old brazen-hearted pirates !)  
And we wanted to be pirates, so we ran away  
to sea !

Aye, we heard a tale of islands ringed with pearl  
on seas of beryl,  
Where the dawning leaped to meet you, like  
a lover, from the night,  
And of golden-streeted cities hid in jungles gay  
with peril,  
Where the rivers lured to follow with the  
word of new delight;  
Aye, we heard a tale of cities,  
Hundred-gated wonder-cities,

Mystic, lost, Cibola-cities, tales as true as  
true could be —  
All the yarns of bright adventure,  
(Ever-new-and-old Adventure !)  
And the whisper of its wonder drew us seek-  
ing out to sea.

So we tramped away to Marblehead, to Salem  
and to Glo'ster —  
(O, just to sniff the tar and see the rocking  
riding-lights !)  
But Fortuna ran before us till we followed,  
found, and lost her  
Like a vision in the doldrums of forbidden  
island-heights !  
Aye, we dropped away to seaward —  
Wing-and-wing we swept to seaward —  
And the mate, *he* was a pirate, just as plain  
as plain could be ;  
But we never found an ingot —  
Not a single, blessed ingot ! —  
Though they glittered through our fancy like  
the sunrise on the sea.

Now the wind is fair from south'ard, and the  
schooners in the offing  
Are breaking out their tops'l's for the venture  
down the bay,  
And the brass-bejewelled liners in their elegance  
are scoffing

At our lurid old sea-visions of the Indies and  
Cathay.

“*They are ghosts of dead romances,*”

Hoot the sirens — “*dead romances* —

*Ghosts of obsolete romances, that are doubtful as can be —*

*Just the dreams of drunken sailors —*

*Paunchy, roaring, grog-shop sailors! —*

*Yet their painted slut Adventure, did she lure ye out to sea? ”*

## THE MISANTHROPE

My feet are set on lonely roads that shun the weary towns,  
I fence my rugged pastures on the freeland of the downs;  
The wind that treads the barren sweep of deserts and of seas  
Is my servant at the sowing, and my confidant at ease.  
Comes a whisper in the gloaming — comes a shouting at the morn —  
“ Brother, sleep,” or “ Brother, waken ! ”— lest his brother be forlorn ;  
And I hear him through the Babel of the human monkey-clan —  
“ O the Gods were surely weary when they stooped to make a Man ! ”

And yet I may not laugh away the sordidness and sham,  
Or join the clever cynics with a poisoned epigram ;  
“ The howling of the tempest drowns the yap-ping of the mob — ”  
If ye drop a jewelled dagger, does the tinkle drown a sob ?  
O ye “ masters of creation,” with your “ towers to the stars ”—

See ye not the grinning terror 'neath the tinsel  
of your wars?

— But the whisper! “*Brother — brother!*  
*Ape you, too, the monkey-clan?*  
*Pity — for the Gods were weary when they*  
*stooped to make a Man!*”

## THE DEPARTURE

(Typhoon Weather)

In the west is a funeral-flame,  
In the east is a festal flare,  
Where the skies rejoice at the rise of the moon  
And grieve at the sun's despair —  
Titans in pride and shame,  
Red targe to blood-red targe —  
The sea lies thralled by a devil's rune  
Silent from marge to marge.

A ship's black bulk between,  
And the smoke-flag drifting low —  
For the air droops dead as a love-sigh breathed  
A thousand years ago.  
The bare masts lifting lean  
Nod to a slate-drab sky,  
And the dull stars peer like eyes mist-wreathed  
Watching an old love die.

Out to the gloom of the sea !  
The wash of the wake breaks white,  
And the shore-boats lift on a ribbon of fire  
That slashes the robe of night.  
Ah, Heart, may we yet win free,  
Till the hearse-plume palm-fringe fades,  
And drown our dream of a lost desire  
In the wind-whipped blue of the Trades ?

*Heart, may we yet win free  
From the spell of the sunlit sea,  
From the lure of the long delights  
Of our dear dead island-nights,  
From the sea-fire's sorcery-flare,  
And the bold limbs flashing bare,  
From the full breast's sobbing heave,  
And the dark hair's tangled weave —  
From the magic and mystery  
Of our island-dream of the sea —  
Heart, may we yet win free?*

## PROPEMPTIKON

Out by the rim of the sea, on the grey sand-reaches,  
The wind plays a desolate dirge on the harp of the beaches ;  
The crests of the wind-bitten dunes are streaming to leeward,  
Aping the smoulder of spindrift whirling from seaward ;  
The blades of the sere beach-grass are alive with the patter  
Of myriad air-driven feet of the sands as they scatter,  
And far on the steely horizon a topsail is gleaming,  
Fading to southward to skylands of drifting and dreaming.

Topsails that flicker and falter, then, suddenly bolder,  
Droop in the sea, and are hid by the loom of her shoulder,  
Leaving me sad 'mid the ashes and embers of passion  
That mock with their drabness the Dawn-Wizard leaping to fashion  
Flame-towered, pennanted glories — whose fingers bedizen

With masquerade-tatters of splendour the virgin horizon,  
Till lo — comes the King of the Masque — and with Puritan scorning  
Homeward I go like a ghost in the blaze of the morning.

## DOSTA!

(Gypsy Song)

WITH the sun in the sky  
    And the wind in the grasses,  
The flash of an eye  
    And the laughter of lasses,  
With dawn on the road  
    And a light shoulder-load —  
Though the going be smooth or the go-  
    ing be rough,  
*Dosta!* It is enough!

With a star and a moon  
    And a luck with the weather,  
The lilt of a tune  
    And the dew on the heather,  
With wine and a friend  
    At the gay journey's end —  
Though the going be smooth or the go-  
    ing be rough,  
*Dosta!* It is enough!

## TO A HALF-BRED MARE THAT DIED

FEET in the dark that are more than human,

Following light on the night-hid trail —

Grace that passeth the grace of woman,

Ears alert for the master's hail —

Have you forgotten me, then, in the Shadow,

O dear bay mare with the mane flung free?

Or say, does a neigh from the pasture-meadow

Cry, "*Mount, and over the hills with me*"?

There's a loss that is dire as the loss of brother

That the world has ordered may scarce be  
wept,

For grief for a horse is a grief to smother,

To slay with a jest, if your face be kept!

O pass untroubled that empty bridle

That hangs like a corpse on the stable wall —

Though the road be dull and the heart beat idle,

'Twas a horse — let that be the end of it  
all. . . .

There's a trail that follows the sun-rich valleys,

Looping the hills to a haunted sea —

There's a beat of a hoof where the woodland  
alleys

Stretch to an Arcady far and free;

And the lilting of long-dead song and banter

Drifts to my ears with an old surprise —

O mare, have you sorrow for life, who canter,

A shade, on the pastures of Paradise?

Dawns that we greeted on cloud-hung highlands,  
(Dizzy the ways, but your feet were sure)  
Hills that lifted like fog-wrapped islands,  
Snaring the heart with their distant lure —  
May I forget them? Or find them, lonely,  
All for the brush of a wind-whipped mane?  
Peace! For a mare is a mare, that only —  
Dead, can ye saddle or sit her again?

Only a horse . . . but my heart's convictions  
Ever have whispered of kindly Fates,  
And I hear, in the face of the priest's predictions,  
The ghost-mare stamp at the darksome Gates.  
A rattle of hooves, and as lane and byway  
Tempted us once, let the trackless stars!  
Till the Tollman Peter, who guards the highway,  
Hark to a whinny, and — loosen the bars!

Feet in the dark that are more than human,  
Following light on the night-hid trail —  
Grace that passeth the grace of woman,  
Ears alert for the master's hail —  
Is it a vision, the shape in the meadow,  
O dear bay mare with the mane flung free —  
Or say, does a ghost from the After-Shadow  
Cry, "*Mount, and over the Dark with me*"?

## THE PENALTIES

A Fool once danced with Fate on Sorrow's bier,  
And found Remorse beside him, led by Fear:  
The jester, pallid, cried "Excuse — excuse —  
I was a Fool, because I might not choose!  
Yet I repent. Forgive me! See, I pray —  
Lo, I have sinned, but Ye have shown the Way."

*Still, though he clasped their knees, and prayed  
to Sorrow,*  
*Remorse gave Yesterday, and Fear To-morrow.*

A brother Fool dragged Sorrow from his  
hearse —  
Cast out the grim corpse like an emptied  
purse —  
"Lo, I have drawn my wage, and spent it well,"  
He cried — "Now let me weep, and win my Hell.  
For I would grieve." He laughed, and stooped  
to hear  
What words the blind Remorse should speak for  
Fear:

*Remorse turned groping; dumb Fear followed  
after,*  
*Leaving the Fool alone with scourgeman Laugh-  
ter.*

## THE TRUE MAGIC

THE beauty that men seek is half a dream —  
Where'er we wander, yet it lies afar ;  
It touches with its wand a setting star,  
It stirs the ripple of an ebbing stream.  
And though we run beyond the dawning-gleam,  
Or kneel to worship at an altar bright,  
We may not know the soul of its delight,  
Or more than marvel at its palest beam.

And yet in visions men have lived to see —  
Aye, dared the stunning glories of its face —  
And from their wonder wrung the skill to  
trace  
In flaming glyphs a dream of majesty —  
To strike a stone to rapture, or to grace  
A sorrow with a robe of melody.

## THE CHILDREN'S FLEETS

BENEATH a kindly sun  
There winks a mighty sea ;  
Across the waters run  
Our fleets of fantasy —  
The frigates grim and tall,  
The schooners low and black —  
From trireme out of Gaul  
To skiff of Sarawak.

The lily-pads that drift  
Beneath the summer breeze,  
Are magic isles that lift  
Their peaks on tropic seas.  
The scum that roofs the pond  
With flaunt of filmy seed  
Is spelled by fairy wand  
To thick Sargasso weed.

Ye say the lofty ships,  
Our barks and pirate-brigs,  
Are naught but whittled chips  
And stripped and riven twigs ?  
From reefed sea-battered isle  
To harbor-city spires,  
The fancies that beguile  
Our hungry dream-desires ?

Ye dare not tell us so!  
We may not halt to hear,  
While crowd the keels below  
Our thronged and bannered pier.  
Ah, pitiful! — to wake  
With shadow-ridden eyes —  
Nor know the dawns that break  
On shores of Paradise!

## THE SMOKE-FLAG

(Engine Choral)

DISTANT, dim, on the earth's far rim where the  
breezes shout to the fulmar free,  
Black I creep o'er the roadless deep on my long  
adventure from quay to quay —  
Flaunt my cloak of the bannered smoke to the  
windy vaults of an empty sea.

South or North ye may fling me forth, O Man,  
my lord, who is still my slave —  
Slave who feeds me, and lord who leads me, and  
god that laughs to a nameless grave —  
East or West as your heart's unrest shall  
scourge ye craven or lure ye brave.

Flag o' dreams — when the red sun gleams and  
the foremast black like a furnace-bar  
Cuts its face as the swift keels race to the sun-  
set-land of the evening star ;  
Flag o' Fate — when the blind sea's hate shall  
have haled ye down from a hopeless war !

## SONNET \*

### TO TIMOTHY DWIGHT

(President of Yale University 1886-1899)

THERE is a splendor in the wheeling years  
That lights the soul with myriad sanctities —  
There is a magic in old memories,  
And a dear joy in half-forgotten tears ;  
So, when the long light trails adown the skies  
And lends new glories to the garden's flowers,  
Come with the years the golden-footed hours,  
And the fresh insight of unclouded eyes.

Youth, I would sing ye sermons on your pride !  
His is the Youth-in-Age that lives forever ;  
An holier strength than yours, that wavers  
never,  
That has known Life, yet stoops not to deride.  
Hark to the lesson, novice ! Learn the  
truth —  
Age ye as he, and win to deeper youth.

\* Reprinted from the 1914 Class Book.

## THE PHILANDERER

THE moon was a gypsy's penny  
    Meshed in the hair of Night,  
The road was a scarf of silver  
    And the river a robe of light —  
And was it the dream while waiting,  
    Or was it She when she came,  
That turned the thought to a rapture  
    And the blood to a pulsing flame?

'Twas She, ye say — but ye weary,  
    Be the maiden never so fair!  
'Tis but in the dream ye're constant,  
    And ye may not clasp her there.  
So haste ye not the fulfilling,  
    Lest the gold of the dream be dross —  
Lest heads be bowed with the sorrow  
    And hearts be dead with the loss.

And shall ye turn from the meeting  
    In the flare of the white moon-flood,  
And shall ye flee from the kisses  
    Of the soft lips red as blood?  
Ah, shame! Do ye fear for the morrow?  
    Love, love, while the dream be new —  
*On the chance that ye win to a trysting*  
    *When ye find that your dream is true!*

## RODRIPEN

### THE QUEST

*From the Romany*

I SOUGHT my love 'mid the haze of the highway  
dust,

Where the tilted van crept slow in the noon-  
day sun —

For a ringlet stirred at the touch of the zeph-  
yr's gust,

And I dreamed that my heart was won.

I sought my love where the hillside broke to the  
bay,

(O long sea-road to the land of my heart's  
desire!)

For her eyes were bright with the morn, and her  
cheeks were gay,

And the dawn was her altar-fire.

O the roads are marked with the print of her  
dancing feet,

And I find her smile on the lips of a hundred  
maids,

But she hides afar where the stars and the  
mountains meet

And laughs at the slow decades —

Till the world is sown with the ash of my scattered camps  
And my heart is chill with the breath of the sunset blast —  
Yet still in the Dark is the flare of the fairy lamps  
That shall call me to Love at last.

## TO A POET WHO DIED YOUNG

THOUGH thy life seem as the day,  
And thy death the gloaming-grey,  
Though thy spirit loose its hold  
With the fading sunset-gold,  
Ere thy song be half begun  
Or thy fairy cities won  
Or thy web of vision spun —  
Never weep.

Where thou sowest, thou wilt reap,  
In the Land beyond the Sleep.  
Thou wilt find a fresher tongue  
For thy lyrics yet unsung,  
And thy hand a wiser pen,  
Till thy music sweep again  
Flaming through the lives of men!  
Never sigh;

Thinkest Those behind the sky  
Made a Poet but to die?



## **LYRICS FROM THE SCHERIAN**



## THE OUTLANDER'S SONG

YE who dwell in Fairyland,  
    Half a world away,  
Know ye sting of night's tears  
    Drying with the day?  
Though the draught of Pleasure  
    Be ever yours to drain,  
Children of the Dawn-glow,  
    Learn the bliss of Pain!

Ye who dwell in Fairyland,  
    Know ye naught but joys?  
Press ye from your vine's wealth  
    Wine that never cloys?  
Win, O win to Sorrow  
    With the fading leaf —  
Children of the wise Gods,  
    Pray the gift of Grief!

Ye who dwell in Fairyland.  
    Dancing in the sun,  
Lift ye now my rue-cup  
    When the wine is done!  
Idle falls the laughter,  
    Closer clings the hand —  
*Children of the April,*  
    *O weep and understand!*

## THE SONG OF THE HARBOR-MAIDENS

LILT the music ne'er so featly  
From the throbbing lyre,  
Drop the veiling lid discreetly  
On the glances' fire!  
Heed the grey wife and her warning,  
Daughters of the jewelled morning,  
Though the love-word linger sweetly  
On the lips of young desire!

Lo, the gaunt sea-battered galleys  
Fresh from Scylla's den!  
Hark ye, down the woodland alleys  
Rings the mirth of men!  
Till the parted leaves discover  
Youth and maiden, maid and lover,  
And the fading color rallies,  
Dims and rallies, pales again!

Tresses black as plume of raven,  
Lips as red as flame,  
Heed ye how ye seek the haven,  
Lest ye win to shame!  
Ah, but glimpsed ye 'neath the arbor  
Painted headsails in the harbor?  
Age is but a sorry craven,  
And is laughing Love to blame?

## SERENADE

LOVE, I have furrowed far my shifting trails  
By witches' isles that swim in haunted seas,  
And glimpsed the silver of thy galley's sails  
Rounding the capes of drowsy Cyclades —

Followed and found thee, mirage-born of dream,  
Wrought of the flame of dawn and wine of  
dew —

Waking the world to wonder with thy gleam,  
Soothing with petal-hands to dream anew.

Hail the Releaser! Lo, enchanted shores  
Rise at the tilting of His flagon-rims,  
Till I am mazed as foam-thresh from my oars,  
Drunk with the marble lyric of thy limbs!

## ECHO SONG

MAIDEN with the sunny eyes,  
 And the south-wind in thy tresses,  
 Though the glades of Paradise  
 With their haunted wildernesses  
 Lure to follow,  
 Never heed!  
 Shun the lilting syrinx-reed!  
 Only sorrow  
 Cometh after  
 All its flood of joyous laughter,  
 And though dear the call may be,  
 Maiden, yet be free!

Little Mistress Never-Care,  
 Weaving in thy fairy dances,  
 Hast thou yet the will to dare  
 All our ages-old romances?  
 But the calling —  
 Must thou go  
 Where the faun-note flutters low?  
 Wait the falling  
 Echo after —  
*“Love is more than joy and laughter,*  
*And though dear the call may be,*  
*Maiden, yet be free! ”*

## ENVOY

For gift of ruddy sunset-light on sea and barren strand,  
For rapture of the summer dawn, and heart to understand,  
For freedom of the gracious Earth, for life and its reward —  
To whomsoever Thou mayst be, my gratitude, O Lord !

And if there be a Journey's-end more joyous than the way,  
And if there be an Afterglow more splendid than the day,  
A canvas of Eternity when human colors dim —  
Whatever Artist-God there be, my gratitude to Him !





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